

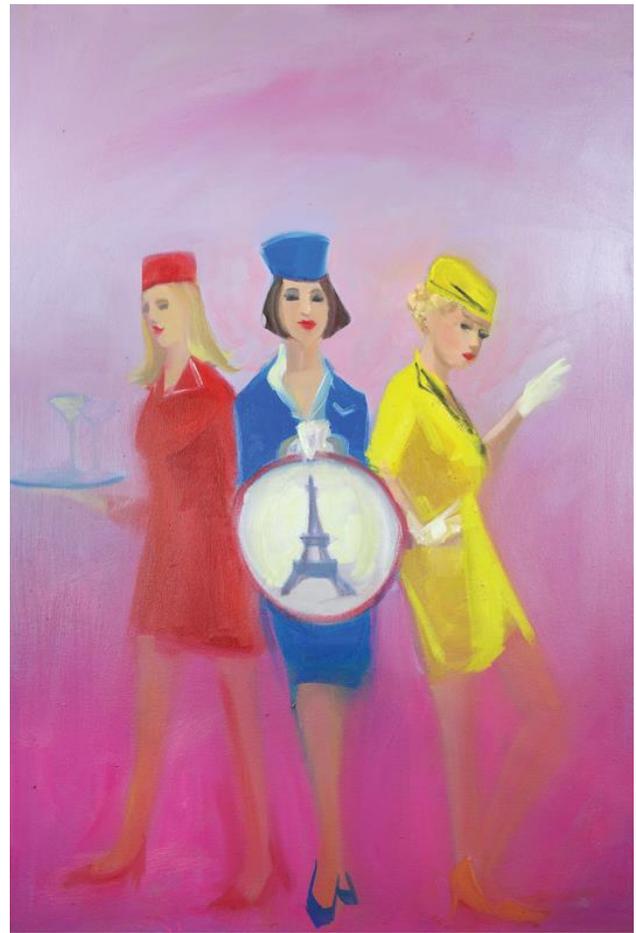


INDIANA
REPERTORY
THEATRE

Boeing Boeing

by
Marc Camoletti

translated by
Beverley Cross & Francis Evans



March 7 – April 2, 2017 on the OneAmerica Mainstage

STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts
with contributions by Janet Allen • Laura Gordon
Vicki Smith • Matthew LeFebvre • Charles cooper

Indiana Repertory Theatre • 140 West Washington Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director • Suzanne Sweeney, Managing Director

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BOEING BOEING

by Marc Camoletti translated by Beverley Cross & Francis Evans

Paris has long been known as the city of love. However, in Bernard's case, it is the city of interlocking flight schedules, an impeccable bachelor pad, and three well-vetted flight attendants who also happen to be his fiancées! In classic farcical tradition, Bernard and his American friend, Robert, hold on by the skin of their teeth as their affair is threatened with delayed flights and mistaken identity. In the tradition of early Roman comedy, Marc Camoletti offers his audience uproarious models of the knave, the fool, and the clever servant through Bernard, Robert, and Berthe. These three, accompanied by three foreign fiancées, present a whirlwind of slamming doors and romance while challenging and, ultimately, being reined in by the authority of monogamy.

Student Matinee: March 22, 2017

Estimated length: 2 hours & 30 minutes

THEMES & TOPICS

Love and Marriage, Physical Comedy, Genre and Farce, European Culture

CONTENT ADVISORY

Boeing Boeing is a fun-filled farce that contains references to infidelity and mild sexual innuendo.

Recommended for grades 9-12.

STUDY GUIDE CONTENTS

Executive Artistic Director's Note	3
Director's Note	4
Playwright & Translators	5
Designer Notes	6
Farce	8
Jet Travel in the Sixties	10
Flight Attendants	14
Around the World	16
Foreign Phrases	20
Alignment Guide	22
Pre-Show Questions	23
Discussion Questions	23
Writing Prompts	25
Activities	25
Resources	26
Glossary	28
The Role of the Audience	29

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LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

BY JANET ALLEN, EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Laughter is the cure for many things—it makes us healthier, lighter, and more relaxed. It gives us insight into the frailties of the human condition. That’s exactly why we are serving up *Boeing Boeing*, a farce extraordinaire about the most farcical of human emotions: love.

Of course, the other thing about farce is that its true home is in the theatre; while there have been many great film and television farces—I’ve been thinking a lot about Mary Tyler Moore lately, in the wake of her death, and what a magnificent farceur she was!—the theatre serves farce in the most piquant and immediate manner. We can literally see the actors sweat, and watch to see if they land a wrong foot or if they crack each other up. In film and video they simply edit out the mistakes; in the theatre, audiences get to enjoy them!

But as we say in the theatre, “Tragedy is easy; comedy is hard.” This axiom refers to the intense precision that is required in comedy, and especially in farce, which makes huge demands upon the actor. You’ll see extremes in physical behavior, in timing, in stamina. It’s like running sprints for two hours; actors often say that they have to be in peak condition to play farce. While their goal is to make it look easy, the reality is that it’s hard work!

Victor Hugo said, “Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face.” Milton Berle said, “Laughter is an instant vacation.” Victor Borge said, “Laughter is the shortest bridge between two people.” These aphorisms and many others remind us of the global power of laughter. We give ourselves over to laughter in these dark days not only of the calendar, but of world view, when we need more than ever to be reminded of our common humanity.

Cristina Panfilio & Kelsey Brennan in Noel Coward’s Fallen Angels at the IRT (2012).



RECIPE FOR COMEDY

BY LAURA GORDON, DIRECTOR

French playwright Marc Camoletti wrote *Boeing Boeing* in 1960. The English language adaptation of this French farce ran in London for seven years, and by 1991 the play was listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the most performed French play in the world. It was revived in London in 2007, and a Broadway revival followed in 2008. Since then it has been enjoying a new life in productions across the country.

Boeing Boeing contains all the elements of a traditional French farce: physical comedy, mistaken identities, lightning-fast dialogue, and an exaggerated, outrageous, improbable plot. Bernard is an American architect living in Paris in the early 1960s. He is engaged to Gloria. And to Gabriella. And to Gretchen. All three fiancées are flight attendants, on three different airlines. The successful juggling of Bernard's ladies is reliant on the predictability of international flight timetables. But with the introduction of the Super Boeing jetliner, which is able to travel at a much faster speed, those old timetables are no longer so reliable—making Bernard's life much less predictable. Add to the mix a less-than-worldly old friend from Wisconsin, a sassy French housekeeper, and seven doors, stir with mathematical precision ... and you get farce!

For this production, we've brought together an outstanding group of actors, all of whose work I know well. They are highly skilled, passionate, intelligent, accomplished classical actors—who also happen to be incredibly funny. The joy of directing, for me, is the alchemy that happens when the right group of people get together in the rehearsal room. I couldn't be happier with the crazy cast we've assembled.

I believe in the power of theatre. Not only does it challenge us, and ask us to examine the way we view the world ... it also entertains. And sometimes, as is the case with *Boeing Boeing*, its goal is simply to make us laugh. Like the old French proverb says, "A day without laughter is a day wasted."

John Guerrasio & Mark Mineart in The Ladies Man, adapted from Georges Feydeau by Charles Morey, produced by the IRT in 2009.



THE WRITERS



MARC CAMOLETTI PLAYWRIGHT

A French citizen born in Geneva to Italian parents, Marc Camoletti (1923-2003) wrote more than 40 plays. His theatre career launched with three plays running simultaneously in Paris. *Boeing Boeing*, produced in London in 1962, became his first major international success, running for seven years. A 1965 Paramount film starred Jerry Lewis, Tony Curtis, and Thelma Ritter. Camoletti's 1986 play *Don't Dress for Dinner* also ran for seven years in London's West End. His plays have been performed in numerous languages in 55 countries. In Paris alone, 18 of his plays have totaled around 20,000 performances in all. He was an associate of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts, and he was awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, one of France's highest honors.

(left) Marc Camoletti

BEVERLEY CROSS TRANSLATOR

Beverley Cross (1931-1998) achieved instant success in 1959 with his play *One More River*, starring Sir Michael Caine and directed by Laurence Olivier. His second play, *Strip the Willow*, made Maggie Smith a star. Among his other successes were the musical *Half a Sixpence* (1963), based on H. G. Wells's book *Kipps*, and his screenplays for 1963's *Jason and the Argonauts* and 1981's *Clash of the Titans*. He wrote opera librettos for Richard Rodney Bennett and Nicholas Maw. He was married to Maggie Smith from 1975 until his death.

(right) Beverley Cross with wife Maggie Smith.



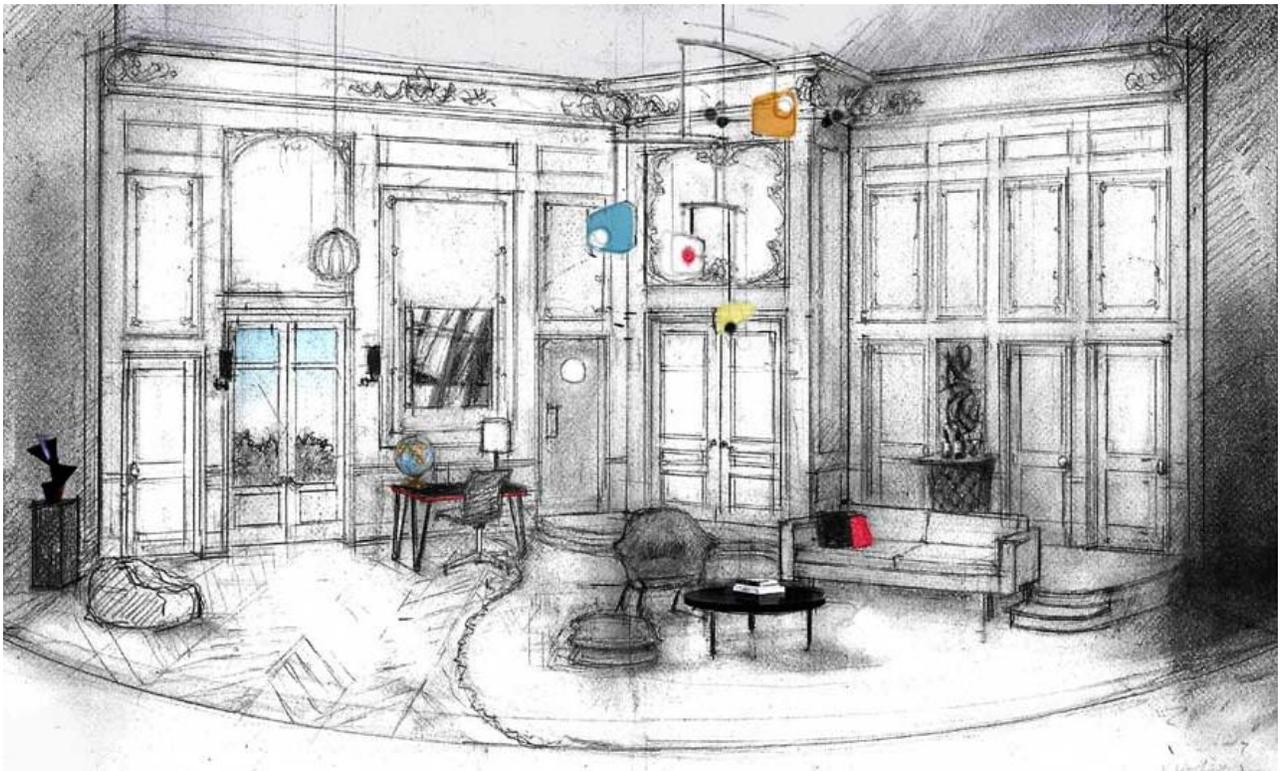
FRANCIS EVANS TRANSLATOR

Francis Evans is a translator who lives in London.

MID-CENTURY MOD

VICKI SMITH SCENIC DESIGNER

Boeing Boeing takes place in the 1960s in a Parisian flat owned by Bernard, an architect. It's a classic bedroom farce set in one room: lots of doors, lots of action, very silly. When the creative team discussed the set, we decided that rather than a more cartooned, non-realistic, theatrical space, we wanted an actual room—or something like an actual room, given that the script requires seven doors. First and foremost, I needed to arrange those seven doors with good visibility for all, since fast entrances and exits are important. Our room has a fairly traditional rectilinear shape, using traditional French architecture (somewhat liberally interpreted), while trying to give some sense of Bernard and his modern tastes in art, furniture, and décor.



Preliminary sketch by scenic designer Vicki Smith.

CHARLES COOPER LIGHTING DESIGNER

Simply put, my job as a lighting designer is to help the audience see the play. I use the qualities of light such as color, texture, and angle to help physically define a space. Like the camera in a film, I may highlight a specific place onstage to help tell the audience what is important about a scene, and where to look. Lighting design will often subliminally reflect the emotional tone of the scene. In its simplest form, this quality could be represented by warm soft light for a comedic scene, and cold, crisp light for a scene that is sad. Arrivals and departures are a key theme in this play, causing me to think about what might create the light in the scene, and where that light is emanating from. Is it hot, crisp daylight crashing through a window of a Paris flat, or soft, romantic light from lamps within the room itself? If I have done my job properly, you as an audience member will be effortlessly transported to Bernard's flat, and you will be able to clearly focus on the madcap comedy and fun contained within.



Preliminary costume sketches for Gabriella, Bernard, Gloria, & Gretchen by designer Mathew LeFebvre.

MATHEW LEFEBVRE
COSTUME DESIGNER

The Calder mobile on our set is the perfect metaphor for this play: at first glance it appears to be out of control, but it is actually organized chaos on a prescribed path. As a nod to Calder's bright primary colors, we opted to bump up the colors of our flight attendant uniforms from what is historically accurate. Since *Boeing Boeing* is set in the early sixties, we couldn't help but be influenced by the series *Mad Men*, with its homage to the clean lines of fashions of the period. We also had fun with the flight attendants out of their uniforms: Gabriella's look is highly influenced by Italian couture, Gloria is undeniably American, and Gretchen has subtle Bavarian overtones. I realize this reflection may seem very cerebral and esoteric, but trust me, the show is a laugh riot.

AN EXTREMELY BRIEF HISTORY OF

FARCE

by Richard J Roberts, Resident Dramaturg

Farce places exaggerated characters in improbable situations where they face outrageous obstacles. In the fifth century BCE, Aristophanes entertained the audiences of Ancient Greece with larger-than-life characters, ridiculous situations, and lots of bawdy humor. Aristophanes combined his uproarious comedy with serious social messages: In *Lysistrata*, the women of Athens and Sparta go on a sex strike until their husbands stop the war. Two centuries later, Roman playwright Plautus became the first great genius of farce, mastering the art of mistaken identity.

The genre got its name from the Old French *farce*, “to stuff,” when irreverent actors in fifteenth century France stuffed comic improvisations between the scenes of religious dramas. Soon, plays that focused exclusively on such gags were popular throughout Europe. Sixteenth century Italy developed its own particular brand of farce, *commedia dell’arte*, with its stock characters and situations enlivened by improvised *lazzi* (what today we call “bits” or “shtick”). The great French playwright Molière got his start in *commedia dell’arte*, later folding its farcical elements into the more refined strictures of French comedy to create such masterpieces as *Tartuffe* and *The Miser*. Shakespeare went all the way back to Plautus’s *Menaechmi*, with its two pairs of mismatched twins, for the plot of his *Comedy of Errors*.



Today when we hear the term farce, we usually think of bedroom farce, best exemplified by the work of Georges Feydeau (1862-1921). Feydeau wrote more than sixty plays, most of them big hits in Paris and around Europe. His most famous include *A Flea in Her Ear* and *The Girl from Maxim's*.

Feydeau was the king of the bedroom farce, plays that focused on the comic possibilities in attempted love affairs. The settings for Feydeau's plays often feature a single room with several doors, and much of the fun comes from the characters chasing each other through those doors, often just missing each other.



Meanwhile in London and on Broadway, *Charley's Aunt* by Brandon Thomas (1892) was rolling them in the aisles and racking up long runs. The new technology of cinema quickly embraced farce, making stars of the Keystone Kops, Charlie Chaplin, and the Marx Brothers. More recently, films like *Some Like It Hot* (1959), the Pink Panther series, and *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988) have become classics, while television has given us *I Love Lucy* and *Fawlty Towers*.

Farce returned to its French roots in 1960 with Marc Camoletti's *Boeing Boeing*, adapted for London by Beverley Cross in 1962 and revised for Broadway by Francis Evans in 2008. The 1962 hit musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* by Larry Gelbart, Bert Shevelove, and Stephen Sondheim returned once again to the Roman master Plautus, stirring together a cocktail of plot lines from several of his greatest hits with a big splash of vaudevillian slapstick. More recent stage farces include the British Michael Frayn's *Noises Off* (1982) and the American Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Tenor* (1989). For more than two millennia, farce has kept us laughing by showing us just how ridiculous the human species can be.

(above) Max Robinson in *The Ladies Man*, adapted from Georges Feydeau by Charles Morey, produced by the IRT in 2009.

(left) Rob Johansen, Matthew Brumlow, & Constance Macy in *The Game's Afoot* by Ken Ludwig, produced at the IRT in 2014.

COME FLY WITH US

An airliner is typically defined as an aircraft intended for carrying multiple passengers or cargo in commercial service. The first aircraft meeting that definition was Russian; it made a round trip from Saint Petersburg to Kiev in 1914. This was only 11 years after the Wright brothers made their historic first flight in 1903. The Russian plane held 16 passengers in wicker chairs, with a bedroom, a lounge, and a toilet; it had heating and electrical lighting. It never began commercial service, however, because of the onset of World War I.

After the war, a variety of bomber planes were adapted for passenger use, holding anywhere from four to a dozen passengers. Most of these were biplanes built out of wood, with the passengers enclosed but the pilots in open cockpits. But at the same time, the first all-metal airliners were being designed and built. In America, the Ford Trimotor was built from 1925 to 1933. It held 8 passengers.

In 1927, Pan American Airways became the first international carrier in the United States, with regularly scheduled flights carrying passengers and airmail between Key West, Florida, and Cuba. Other early international airlines were Imperial Airways in Britain, Lufthansa in Germany, KLM in the Netherlands, and United Airlines in America.

The first modern-looking sleek metal airliners came into service in the 1930s. In 1933, the Boeing 247 began service. It was made of anodized aluminum and had 2 propeller engines mounted on the cantilevered wings, retractable landing gear, and an autopilot. But it only carried 10 passengers, so it was never profitable.

In 1936 the Douglas DC-3 began service, carrying as many as 32 passengers. It was the first airliner that could make money by carrying passengers alone, and it popularized air travel in the United States.



Transcontinental flights across the United States took 15 to 17 hours with three refueling stops. The plane was considered extremely reliable; although production ended in 1950, there are some 2,000 DC-3s still in use today for a variety of purposes.

The jet engine was developed in the 1930s and 40s and first used for military purposes in World War II. The first commercial jet airliner was the British de Havilland Comet, which

began service in 1952. It soon developed problems, however, and the first commercially successful jet airliner was the Boeing 707, built from 1958 to 1979. Various versions of the aircraft had a capacity from 140 to 219 passengers and a range from 2,500 to 5,750 nautical miles. The 707 quickly became the most widely used jetliner of its time. Its popularity led to rapid developments in airport terminals, runways, airline catering, baggage handling, and reservations systems, as well as the upgrading of air traffic control systems.



Jet airliners were able to fly much higher, faster, and further than older piston-powered propellers, making transcontinental and intercontinental travel considerably faster and easier. Suddenly, for the first time in history, much of the world became accessible within a single day's travel.

In the early 1960s, when *Boeing Boeing* takes place, air travel was very different from what it is today. International travel was still considered more a luxury than a commercial industry. Passengers dressed in their finest. Legroom was three to six inches more than it is today. Seats were fewer—and wider. Full meals were served in-flight: soup, meat, salad, vegetables, and dessert—all on china, with sterling flatware and glass wine glasses. Smoking was permitted. Alcohol was free. No ID was necessary. (On the other hand, baggage claim was all done by hand, and took even longer than it does today.)

This is the era when the term “jet set” was created. The jet set were the beautiful people, rich, often famous: movie stars, nightclub singers, socialite millionaires. They took advantage of jet speed to take them from Miami to Acapulco to the Riviera to Rio de Janeiro—places with beaches, resort hotels, and other rich and famous friends, where they enjoyed fun in the sun. Plane tickets were expensive, and this alone was enough to keep the jet set a very exclusive club.

Today, much of that has changed. Although, like everything else, ticket prices have gone up and up, when inflation is taken into account, ticket prices have actually gone down—considerably. A round trip plane ticket today, as a percentage of the average person's income, is about half what it was in the 1960s—which means a lot more people are able to afford to fly. And they do. *Boeing Boeing* takes place in the early sixties, when jet travel was a new, booming trend. In 1965, 20% of the population had flown at least once in their lives; today, 80% have done so. In 1945, there were 120 flights per week across the Atlantic; today, there are 1,200 flights per day across the North Atlantic alone. The number of airline passengers per year in the U.S. doubled between 1958 and 1965, from 50 million to 100 million. Today, that U.S. number is 900 million per year; internationally, more than 3 billion per year.

YOUR SEAT ASSIGNMENT



Boeing

The Boeing Company is a Chicago-based multinational corporation that designs, manufactures, and sells airplanes, rotorcraft, rockets, and satellites worldwide. Boeing is among the largest global aircraft manufacturers, the second-largest defense contractor in the world, and the largest exporter in the United States. In 2015, the company recorded \$96 billion in sales, ranking 27th on the Fortune 500 list and 90th on the Fortune Global 500 list.

Airlines of the 1960s mentioned in Boeing Boeing:

Air Scotland

Scottish Airlines operated from 1946 to 1961. It flew only to British airports and mostly transported military personnel.

Alitalia

Alitalia – *Linee Aeree Italiane* was founded in 1946. The name *Alitalia* is an Italian portmanteau of the words *ali* (wings), and *Italia* (Italy). The company began intercontinental flights between Milan and South America in 1947.

Lufthansa

Lufthansa is the largest airline in Europe. The name of the company is derived from *luft* (the German word for “air”), and *hansa* (a medieval Latin term meaning “guild”). Deutsche Lufthansa was founded in Berlin in 1926 and suspended operations in 1945 after the defeat of Nazi Germany. A new national airline was founded in West Germany in 1953 and acquired the Lufthansa brand the next year. In 1960, Lufthansa bought four Boeing 707s and began international jet flights.

Pan-American

Pan American World Airways, commonly known as Pan Am, was the largest international air carrier in the United States from 1927 until its collapse in 1991. Pan Am is credited with many innovations that shaped the international airline industry, including the widespread use of jet aircraft, jumbo jets, and computerized reservation systems.

TWA

Trans World Airlines (TWA) was a major American airline from 1925 until 2001. Howard Hughes controlled the company from 1939 to 1961. The company began trans-Atlantic service in 1946. In 1958, TWA became the first major airline to hire an African American flight attendant. In 1961, TWA was the first American airline to show movies aboard its aircraft.

ATTENTION PASSENGERS ...

Aeronautical terms used in Boeing Boeing:

Delta wings

The delta wing is shaped in the form of a triangle; it is named for the Greek uppercase letter delta (Δ). The delta wing is typically used for bombers or fighter planes; its only use on a passenger airline was the Concorde, introduced in 1969.

Rolls-Royce turbo-jets

Rolls-Royce was founded in 1904 by Charles Stewart Rolls and Frederick Henry Royce. For most of the 20th century, the luxurious Rolls-Royce was considered the finest car in the world. During World War I, Rolls-Royce became a leading manufacturer of piston aero-engines. In the 1940s, Rolls-Royce was one of the developers of the jet engine, and it still holds a prominent position in aero engine development and manufacture. The Indianapolis Rolls-Royce plant is the largest in the world.

Super-Boeing

The Boeing 727 was first produced in 1962, had its first flight in 1963, and began commercial flights in 1964. Unlike the four-engine 707, which had two engines on each wing, the three-engine 727 had its engines at the rear of the fuselage, one on top and one on either side. The 727 could use shorter runways and fly longer distances than the 707.

thrust

Thrust is the amount of force required to move an object.

Super-Caravelli

Caravelli is probably Gabriella's Italianized version of Caravelle. The Caravelle was the world's first short/medium-range jet airliner, produced by the French Sud Aviation firm beginning in 1955. The Super-Caravelle was an early design for a smaller supersonic transport. Design work started in 1960 and was announced in 1961 at the Paris Air Show, but in 1962 the project was merged with similar work to create the much larger Concorde, which debuted in 1969.

VC10

The VC10 was a long-range British airliner designed and built by Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd, first flown in 1962 and produced through 1970. The VC10 was designed to operate on long-distance routes from the shorter runways of the era; it also performed well in the high heat and high altitude of African airports. The VC10 made the fastest crossing of the Atlantic ever by a jet airliner (5 hours and 1 minute), a record still held to date for sub-sonic airliners; only the supersonic Concorde was faster.



GLAMOR & HARD WORK

Once upon a time—in the fifties and sixties—flight attendants were called stewardesses. They were uniformly young (under 27), single, slim, attractive, and always female; such discriminatory job requirements were actually legal in that era. At a time when the average woman got married at the age of 20, and when women’s opportunities outside the home were limited to teaching, nursing, and the secretarial pool, flying was a new adventure. “These women almost to a person were kind of the black sheep of their families,” says Laurie Power, who began flying for TWA in 1963.

Being a stewardess in the 1960s was very glamorous. “We were almost on the same level as a movie star,” says Sonnie Sims, who began flying for American Airline in 1962. “People admired us when we walked through the terminal. I remember our uniforms—they were all custom-fitted. They were just sculpted to your body, so everybody looked fabulous. We were all thin and had these great figures and wore white gloves and hats. You walked through the terminals with your head really high and you knew everybody was staring at you.”

If you wanted to join this rarified club, Pan Am required knowledge of at least one foreign language. Some airlines asked for a year or two of college; some didn’t. The screening process included multiple interviews, as well as I.Q. and psychological tests. Potential stewardesses typically went to a training center for six weeks of instruction. An important part of the curriculum was safety training. But other matters were equally important, as can be seen in this outline for a 1964 lecture at United Airline’s training center:

Coat:

1. How to carry properly
2. How to put on properly

Together Look:

1. Coat always buttoned
2. Wear gloves
3. Carry everything on one side if possible
4. Ways to carry purse
5. How to carry gloves
6. Scarf in summer raincoat

Review:

1. Posture
2. Standing
3. Walking





Stewardesses were told how to style their hair, how to make themselves up. Some airlines had regulation shades of nail polish and lipstick. The look was polished, and quality control was serious: a stewardess could be suspended for smoking in uniform, forgetting her hat, or tanning too much. Every airline had pre-flight weigh-ins: if you gained too much, you would not fly—or be paid—until you got back down to regulation size.

Along with the glamor came hard work. One stewardess of the era tied a pedometer to her leg on a turnaround flight between Chicago and San Francisco; by the end of the day, she had clocked 17 miles. And while gourmet dinners on china plates may be very grand, that's a lot of work for the woman who is chef, waitress, *and* dishwasher for dozens of diners. Not to mention all the cocktails, blankets, pillows, magazines, luggage—and passengers who are less than gentlemen.

Most women who are former flight attendants will tell you they enjoyed the work, especially those who flew in the early years. The status and the travel were great—for a while. The average stewardess of the fifties and sixties flew for only two years. Even though they were part of the new era of women's liberation, most of them quit in order to get married—a goal which is no doubt familiar to the three engaged stewardesses in *Boeing Boeing*.

AROUND THE WORLD

The international flight attendants in Boeing Boeing mention a number of destinations:

ACAPULCO

Acapulco is located on a deep, semicircular bay on the Pacific coast of Mexico. The city is best known as one of Mexico's oldest and most well-known beach resorts, which came into prominence in the 1950s as a getaway for Hollywood stars and millionaires. Acapulco still attracts many tourists, but today they are mostly from Mexico itself.



AIX-EN-PROVENCE (above)

Aix-en-Provence is a city in southern France, located about 475 miles south-southeast of Paris and about 20 miles north of the coastal city of Marseille. Today Aix-en-Provence has a population of around 150,000. It is a university town, popular with tourists, known for its music festivals.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE (opposite)

Aachen or Bad Aachen, traditionally known in English and French as Aix-la-Chapelle, is the westernmost city in Germany, located on the border between Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Both names Aachen and Aix refer to the city's warm mineral springs; Aix-la-Chapelle refers also to the cathedral built there by Charlemagne, where the Holy Roman Emperor was crowned for six centuries.

ANKARA

Ankara is the capitol of Turkey and its second largest city after Istanbul. It is an important commercial and industrial city, located at the center of Turkey's road and railway networks. The city gave its name to Angora wool (from the Angora rabbit), the long-haired Angora goat (the source of mohair), and the Angora cat. The area is also known for its pears, honey, and muscat grapes.

BEIRUT

Beirut is the capital and largest city of Lebanon, located on the Mediterranean coast. One of the oldest cities in the world, it was long a major port and commercial center. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following World War I, Beirut, along with the rest of Lebanon, was placed under the French Mandate. Lebanon achieved independence in 1943, and Beirut became the capital city. The city remained a regional intellectual capital, becoming a major tourist destination and a banking haven. This era of relative prosperity ended in 1975 when the Lebanese Civil War broke out.

CARACAS

Caracas is the capital and the largest city of Venezuela, located on the northern coast of South America. Growing in economic importance during Venezuela's oil boom in the early 20th century, the city went through an intensive modernization program in the 1950s and 1960s. This rapid growth made Caracas a magnet for the rural poor, creating a massive and highly dangerous slum belt around the city. Today Caracas has one of the highest murder rates in the world; most violent crimes go unsolved.

COLOMBO

Colombo is the largest city in Sri Lanka, the island nation at the southern tip of India. From the start of British colonial rule in 1802, through independence as a British Dominion in 1948, to a Marxist insurrection in 1972, Sri Lanka was known as Ceylon. The mixture of native tradition and British colonialism is still evident everywhere, from architecture to cuisine. In the 19th century, Colombo was known as the garden city of the east, and some of that feeling is still evident in its tree-lined boulevards.

FRANKFURT

Frankfurt am Main is the fifth-largest city in Germany, located in the west-central part of the country. A global hub for commerce, culture, education, tourism, and traffic, it's the site of many global and European headquarters. IN 1961, Frankfurt Airport became Europe's second-busiest airport behind London Heathrow Airport.

**GUADALUPE**

Guadalupe is a volcanic island located 150 miles off the west coast of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula in the Pacific Ocean.

HELSINKI

Helsinki is the capital and largest city of Finland. It is the world's northernmost metro area of more than one million people, and the northernmost European capital. In 2011, *Monocle* magazine ranked Helsinki the most liveable city in the world.

MELBOURNE

Melbourne is the second largest city in Australia, located on the southeastern coast. Melbourne rates highly in education, entertainment, health care, research and development, tourism, and sport. It has been ranked as the world's most liveable city for the last six years by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

ORLY (below)

Orly is a commune (township) in the suburbs of Paris, about eight miles south of the city center. Prior to the opening of Charles de Gaulle Airport in 1976, Orly Airport was the major airport in Paris. In 1958, TWA, Air France, and Pan Am flew nonstop to New York in 14 hours. (By way of comparison, a similar flight today would take 9 hours.)

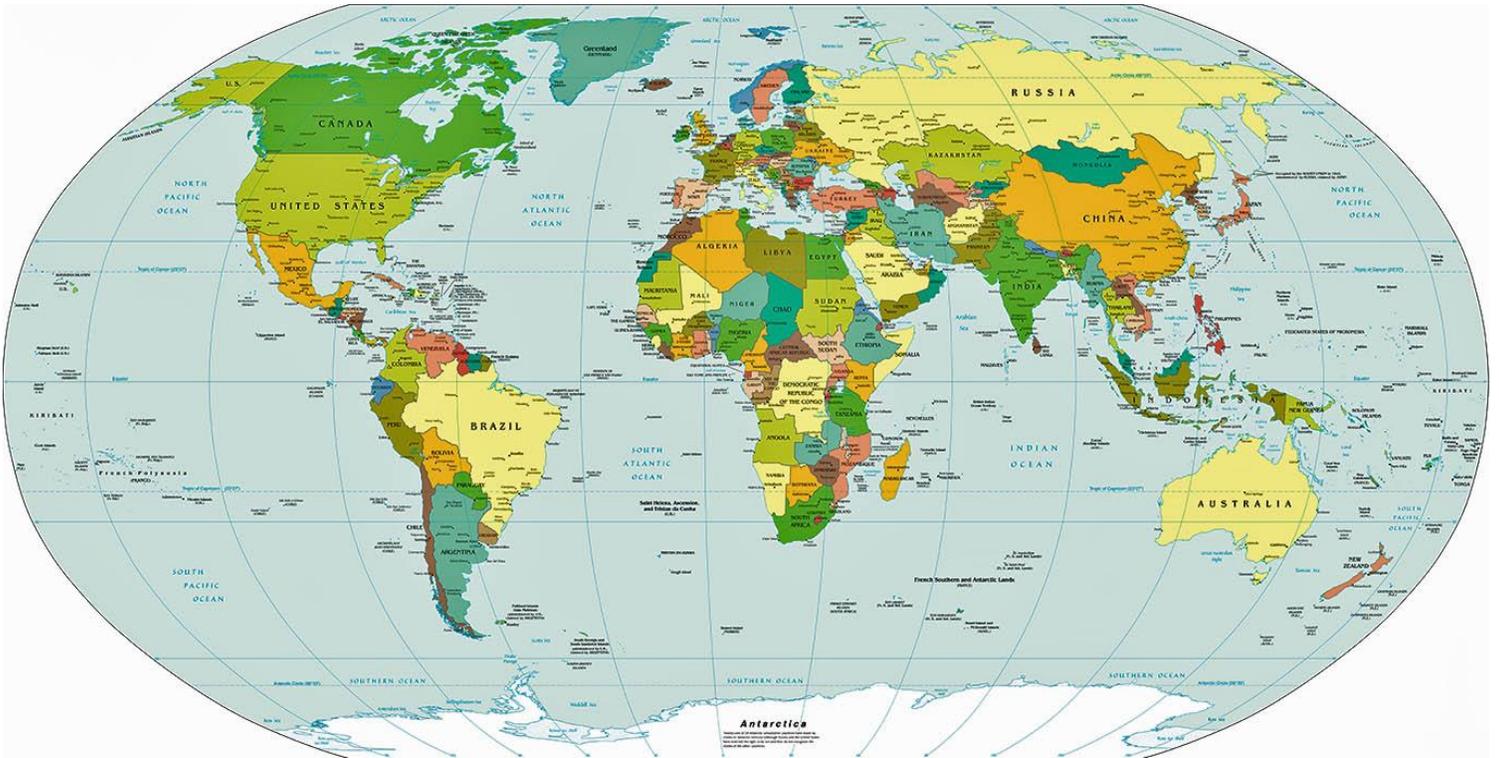


RENO

In 1931, hoping to attract out-of-state visitors during the Great Depression, Nevada lowered its residency requirement for divorce to six weeks. The strategy worked, particularly in the town of Reno, which made a concerted effort to attract and accommodate divorce seekers. Entrepreneurs established "divorce ranches" where plaintiffs could wait out their six-week residency requirement. Hotels, restaurants, casinos (gambling was legalized in Nevada the same year), and of course lawyers thrived. Over the next decade, more than 30,000 people came to Reno to get a divorce, pumping an estimated \$5 million per year into a town of only 20,000 residents. Reno was the "divorce capitol of America" until the 1980s, when more lenient divorce laws became widespread throughout the nation.

RHINE RIVER

The Rhine River forms in Switzerland and flows north, serving as the border between France and Germany. The Rhine has carried trade and goods deep inland since the Roman Empire. The many castles and fortifications along the Rhine testify to its importance as a waterway in the Holy Roman Empire. In the modern era, it has become a symbol of German nationalism.



RIO DE JANEIRO

Rio de Janeiro is the second largest city in Brazil and the sixth largest in the Americas. Rio is one of the most visited cities in the Southern Hemisphere and is known for its natural settings, Carnival, music, and beaches, as well as famous landmarks such as Sugarloaf Mountain; the giant statue of *Christ the Redeemer* (erected in the 1920s) atop Corcovado mountain; and Maracanã Stadium (opened in 1950), one of the world's largest football (soccer) stadiums.

SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE (below)

Saint-Germain-en-Laye is a commune (township) in the suburbs of Paris, about 12 miles west of the city center.

STUTTGART

Stuttgart, located in southern Germany, is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the nation. After devastating air raids on the city and its automobile factories during World War II, the city bounced back and by the mid-fifties had become a major economic, industrial, tourism, and publishing center, as well as an extremely important transport junction.



CROSSING BORDERS

Because the characters in Boeing Boeing come from France, Italy, and Germany, as well as the United States, they use a number of foreign words and phrases:

GERMAN

auf wiedersehen

literally, until we see (each other) again

Bahnhofstrasse

Station Street

Friedenstrasse

Peace Street

gut nacht

good night

Herr

Mr.

ja

yes

liebchen

diminutive of *liebe* (love);
honey, darling;
considered very old-fashioned

liebling

diminutive of *liebe* (love);
used like darling or sweetheart
in English.

nein

no

wunderbar

wonderful



FRENCH

bon appetit

literally, good appetite; enjoy your meal!

ces Américains

These Americans

Monsieur

Mr. or sir

Mademoiselle

Miss; an unmarried woman or a young girl

mon dieu

my god

Trois jours avec l'Allemagne

Three days with the German



ITALIAN

buona notte

good night

grazie

thank you

mio dio

my god

scusi

excuse me

sei bello

You are handsome.

si

yes

un minuto

one minute



ALIGNMENT GUIDE

Seeing a performance at Indiana Repertory Theatre is a great way to help make connections for students and facilitate their understanding of a text. Some key literature standards to consider on your trip would be:

Reading – Literature

- RL.1 – Read and comprehend a variety of literature independently and proficiently
- RL.2 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions about literary elements, themes, and central ideas
 - Sample: 9-10.RL.2.2: *Analyze in detail the development of two or more themes or central ideas over the course of a work of literature, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details.*
- RL.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view
 - Sample: 11-12.RL.3.2: *Analyze a work of literature in which the reader must distinguish between what is directly stated and what is intended (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement) in order to understand the point of view.*
- RL.4 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by connecting various literary works and analyzing how medium and interpretation impact meaning

Reading – Nonfiction

- RN.2 – Extract and construct meaning from nonfiction texts using a range of comprehension skills
 - Sample: 8.RN.2.3: *Analyze how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, events, and ideas.*

Reading – Vocabulary

- RV.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
 - Sample: 9-10.RV.3.3: *Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.*



PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before seeing the play, research the root of comedy and have a discussion about what is comedic. Talk about the different styles of comedy you know and the plays, movies, and television shows you have seen that are classified as comedies. What are the common elements? In what ways do they differ? Look at comedy through the ages. Why do you think comedians still revere Charlie Chaplin, the Stooges, Whoopie Goldberg, George Carlin, and Steve Martin? What do you think makes Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* one of the most produced plays in the world? *The Simpsons* and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* are America's longest-running television comedies. What do they possess that have made them such favorites?

After seeing the play, discuss other contemporary comedies you have seen on TV or film or at the theatre that remind you of *Boeing Boeing*. How do the character types from *Boeing Boeing* still exist today in contemporary entertainment?

Discuss the title of the play, *Boeing Boeing*. If you knew nothing else about the play, what might the title alone suggest to you about it? Discuss what makes a good title.

After seeing the play, discuss other titles that might have been used for the play.

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In *Boeing Boeing*, Bernard has developed an elaborate scheme that involves a great deal of deception. In the scene where he explains the scheme to Robert, how effectively does he justify his behavior? How would your feelings change if the play were a drama rather than a comedy? If you knew someone who was actually juggling three relationships, would you feel differently about that person than you do about Bernard? Why or why not? How are our responses to stage or screen characters different from our responses to real people?

A foil is a character who contrasts with another character in some way. How does the maid Berthe act as a foil to her employer and the others in the play? How do her actions and her words contrast with those of the other characters? How does her presence illuminate and sharpen our experience of the other characters? At what points in the play is she less of a foil, and more of an accomplice?

Discuss the use of music in the IRT's production of *Boeing Boeing*. How did these choices complement or detract from the production? In what ways did the music support the mood of the characters and story? How did music and staging work together to enhance the transitions between scenes?

The seven doors on the set would be unusual for most plays, but are relatively standard for farce. How are the doors used to comic effect in the play? How might this large number of doors be related thematically to the issues and/or the plot of *Boeing Boeing*?

The characters in the play are French, Italian, German, and American. Two of the Americans are identified by their region of origin: New York and Wisconsin. How do the various characters represent distinctive, recognizable types—even stereotypes. How do they defy those stereotypes? How has our view of such characterizations changed since the play was first written in 1960. Discuss how the actors played these characters. In what ways did their idiosyncrasies add to the humor of the play?

Three of the characters in the play are flight attendants. What were some of the stereotypical characteristics attributed to flight attendants in the 1960s? How have society's views on that profession changed since then? How has it remained the same? How do the characters of Gloria, Gabriella, and Gretchen in *Boeing Boeing* conform to those stereotypes? How do they defy those stereotypes?

Humor is often said to have an element of cruelty. Why do we laugh when bad things happen to people in comedies (or sometimes in real life)? Define and discuss the term *schadenfreude*.

Comedy often focuses on the challenges humans find in attempting to control their impulses. How has this tension between doing what one wants to do and doing what is considered socially acceptable played itself out across world history? How does this tension manifest itself today in politics, religion, the arts, and the media?

Compare and contrast *Boeing Boeing* and with other famous comedies such as

Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Moliere's *Tartuffe*

Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano*

Noel Coward's *Private Lives* or *Blithe Spirit*

Kaufman & Hart's *You Can't Take it With You*

Joseph Kesselring's *Arsenic and Old Lace*

Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple*

Michael Frayne's *Noises Off*

Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Tenor*

In your analysis, consider plot, setting, characters, mood, language, costumes, and staging, as well as style.

Discuss the term denouement. What is it? Why is it important? Discuss the denouements of *Boeing Boeing* and other works your class has seen or read together this year. When did the writers choose to tie up all the loose ends, or to leave some ambiguities? How can either choice make a greater impact or give more satisfaction?

What did you find funny in the play? Did you discover that there were parts that others found humorous that you did not? Discuss different styles of humor and what makes different people laugh.

WRITING PROMPTS

Write a review of the play. A well-rounded review includes your opinion of the theatrical aspects—scenery, lights, costumes, sound, direction, acting—as well as your impressions of the script and the impact the story and/or themes and the overall production had on you. What moments made an impression on you? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actors' performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? Did you notice the reactions of the audience as a whole? Would you recommend this play to others? Why or why not? To share your reviews with others, send to: *education.irt@gmail.com*

Write the scene that happens the next morning. What if Gabriella and Gretchen have breakfast together without Robert and Bernard. Will the two women discover the truth of what has been happening? How will they react? What will they say to the men when they wake up? How will Berthe figure into the scene? How can you maintain the comedy mode of the story? Write your scene in dialogue, like a play. Remember that farce is very physical, so be sure to include activity with comic potential in your scene.

Research the life of a woman who was a pioneer in her career. Write a poem, or song, or short story that reflects on some aspect of her life's work. Here are some examples to inspire you:

Marie Curie	Ida B. Wells	Amelia Earheart	Anne V. Coates
Shirley Chisholm	Barbara Jordan	Florence Nightingale	Madame C. J. Walker
Joan of Arc	Helena Rubenstein	Indira Gandhi	Golde Meir

ACTIVITIES

Look up some reviews and critiques of other productions of this play and discuss the elements of those productions in comparison to the IRT's production that you saw. Did those critics lead you to more insight on any of the play's elements? Discuss the critic's use of descriptive language to comment about the production.

Being a flight attendant was an entry into the work force for many young women at a time when not all jobs were open to women. Research women in the work force throughout history. Create a display or presentation on what careers were open to women when. and/or pioneers in careers for women.

Here are some websites to get you started:

<http://bebusinessed.com/history/history-of-women-in-the-workforce/>

<http://gender.stanford.edu/news/2014/historical-view-american-workplace>

<http://www.thelaborsite.com/women1.cfm>

Use the list of geographical locations on pages 16 to 19 as a starting point to assign each student or group of students a country from around the world. Each student or group can research that country and present an oral or display presentation about that nation's history, geography, people, and culture.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

And Here's the Kicker: Conversations with 21 Top Humor Writers on their Craft by Mike Sacks

Show Me the Funny!: At the Writers' Table with Hollywood's Top Comedy Writers

by Peter Desberg and Jeffrey Davis

Great Comedians Talk About Comedy by Larry Wilde

The Second City Almanac of Improvisation by Anne Libera and Second City Inc

On the Real Side: A History of African American Comedy by Mel Watkin

Bossypants by Tina Fey

Born Standing Up by Steve Martin

Groucho & Me by Groucho Marx

Farce: The Comprehensive and Definitive Account of One of the World's Funniest Art Forms

by Albert Bermel

Rawson's Dictionary of Euphemisms and Other Doubletalk:

Being a Compilation of Linguistic Fig Leaves and Verbal Flourishes

for Artful Users of the English Language by Hugh Rawson

WEBSITES

American Theatre Critics Association

<http://americantheatre critics.org/>

"The Role of Theater Criticism": An interview with *Time Out New York* theater critic David Cote.

<http://www.theatermania.com/new-york-city-theater/tmu/11-2012/the-role-of-theater-criticism-63676.html>

"Is Theatre Criticism in Crisis?"

<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2013/oct/08/theatre-criticism-in-crisis-critics>

"Critical Juncture: 12 of the nation's most influential theatre critics" by David Cote

http://www.tcq.org/publications/at/nov11/critical_juncture.cfm

Aviation Photography

<http://www.airliners.net/about-us/>

Aviation History

<http://www.historynet.com/aviation-history>

Paris Tourism

<http://en.parisinfo.com>

FILMS & TV SERIES

FARCE

- A Night at the Opera* (1935)
- Bringing Up Baby* (1938)
- To Be or Not to Be* (1942)
- Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944)
- Some Like It Hot* (1959)
- It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* (1963)
- Boeing Boeing* (1966)
- The Producers* (1968)
- Murder by Death* (1976)
- The Pink Panther Strikes Again* (1976)
- Foul Play* (1978)
- Nine to Five* (1980)
- Victor/Victoria* (1982)
- Clue* (1985)
- Ruthless People* (1986)
- A Fish Called Wanda* (1988)
- Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988)
- Soapdish* (1991)
- Noises Off* (1992)
- The Birdcage* (1996)
- Bridesmaids* (2011)
- Make 'Em Laugh* (2009), a PBS series on American comedy
- The History of Comedy* (2017), a CNN series on comedy



WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

- His Girl Friday* (1940)
- Norma Rae* (1979)
- Tootsie* (1982)
- Silkwood* (1983)
- Broadcast News* (1987)
- Working Girl* (1988)
- Shakespeare in Love* (1998)
- Erin Brokovich* (2000)
- Legally Blonde* (2001)
- The Devil Wears Prada* (2006)
- Up in the Air* (2009)
- Hidden Figures* (2017)
- Mary Tyler Moore* (1970-1977)
- The West Wing* (1999-2006)
- Mad Men* (2007-2015)



GLOSSARY

18:30

Most non-English-speaking countries use the 24-hour clock to speak of time, as opposed to the 12-hour clock used in most English-speaking countries, including the United States.

hey presto

A British interjection meaning suddenly, as if by magic.

Kinsey report

Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956) published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* in 1948 and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* in 1953. His research base was Indiana University in Bloomington.

meteorite

A meteoroid is a solid piece of debris from a comet or asteroid orbiting the sun. When a meteoroid enters the earth's atmosphere, heating up and forming a fireball, it becomes a meteor (what we see as a shooting or falling star). If the meteor survives its passage through the Earth's atmosphere and impact with the Earth's surface, the remaining object, made of stone and/or iron, is a meteorite.

Napoleon

Through his military prowess, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) rose from the minor nobility to be crowned Emperor of the French in 1804, building an empire that ruled over continental Europe before its collapse in 1815. He is one of the most celebrated and controversial leaders in all history.

nebula

A nebula (Latin for “cloud”) is an interstellar cloud of dust, hydrogen, helium, and other ionized gases. Most nebulae are of vast size, even millions of light years in diameter.

Nibelungen

The *Nibelungenlied* is the German legend that inspired Richard Wagner's *Ring Cycle*.

Parker pen

The Parker Jotter was introduced in 1954 and became Parker's best-selling retracting refillable ballpoint pen. More than 750 million have been sold worldwide. It is the standard by which ball pens are measured. Its refill, originally called the T-Ball (T for tungsten), had a unique spherical porous metal writing tip now commonly used in the pen industry.

saltimbocca alla Romana

Saltimbocca alla Romana features veal, topped with prosciutto and sage, rolled up and cooked in dry white wine and butter. In Italian, saltimbocca means “jump in the mouth.”

Samba

Samba is a Brazilian musical genre and dance style, with its roots in Africa via the West African slave trade and African religious traditions. Considered one of the most popular Brazilian cultural expressions, samba has become an icon of Brazilian national identity.

The Role of the Audience



You, the audience are one of the most important parts of any performance. Experiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:

Leave mp3 players, cameras, mobile phones, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text during the performance.

Food and drink must stay in the lobby.

The house lights dimming and going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show.

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue and sound effects, and look at the scenery, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call because this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.